

# The Musical World.

(REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL POST-OFFICE AS A NEWSPAPER.)

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VOL. 59.—No. 4.

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## WHAT IS A "CORRECT MUSICAL TASTE?"

By G. A. MACFARREN.

(Concluded from page 35.)

Exaggeration is always in bad taste, and is sometimes, alas! exemplified in composition, sometimes in performance. In the latter, it consists in violent accents, and in retarding or hastening the time, and in many other elements of expression that are truly valuable when justly applied, but make caricature when employed without the most delicate sense of fitness. The composer exaggerates who employs extreme chromatic harmonies or modulations into remote keys—which are his most forcible means of expression, his italics or capital letters so to speak, his stamping on the ground or tearing his hair, his jet black cutting against the brightest whiteness—in passages where there is little or nothing to express, or where his subject is characterized by gentle suavity. He exaggerates, too, when he uses fullest power of instruments or voices for the presentation of trivial ideas; and in this display of bad taste the player may match him who seems to punish rather than to coax his instrument, treating it with violence instead of tenderness.

It is, perhaps, the highest end of artistry—productive or executive—to stimulate the imagination of the hearers, to suggest more than to define, to plant thoughts in us which may unfold and fructify, rather than to surfeit our attention with over-ripe completeness. Let illustration be drawn from other arts; a prize was offered for a statue which best should image grief, and was awarded for one whose hands covered her face. The discovery of Moore's Veiled Prophet was twice painted; by one limner, showing the hideous face of Mokanna, with all its horrible mutilation, while the back was turned to the spectator of the girl who witnesses the unveiling; by another artist, reversing the figures, hiding the ugliness of the tyrant and showing in the face of his victim the terror, the hatred, and all that lines and colours could pourtray of her mental agony. What has now to be said is offered with reverence, with profound sense of the greatness of the master to whom it refers, but with a feeling as firm as diffident, that the incidents to be adduced are at least of questionable propriety. Those passages in *The Creation* which seemed designed to imitate the characteristic motions of animals, when an orchestral strain appears to pourtray the spring of the tiger or the coiling of the serpent, which are explained in the words of the ensuing vocal phrase, the song in *The Seasons*, which tells of the sportsman, and represents by a note on the drum the discharge of the shot that brings down his game, transcend the province of art by passing from the ideal to the actual and, in aiming at realism, check the imaginative faculty in the hearer. On the contrary, the song "With verdure clad," in the former work, which seems to utter the sweet contentment of a happy mind in contemplating a summer landscape, and the chorus, "Come, gentle spring," in the latter work, which expresses the gladness we feel in the renascence of nature, have the twofold beauty of their own loveliness coloured, may be, by the sweet fancies they stimulate. Many are the instances that might be cited in illustration of this view, but here is only space to indicate that the same principle of suggestion rather than fulfilment is applicable in musical executancy, and that good taste restrains a performer from redundant expression that would satiate instead of gratify the auditor.

It is a very fine line that divides affected admiration from the wish to admire. Affectation in all shapes is absurd, if not odious; and yet there are positions in which we may rightly "assume a virtue if we have it not," bearing in mind that "hypocrisy is the homage vice pays to virtue." In this light we may tolerate, and to some extent respect, the patience of those who attend the Monday Popular Concerts, and have a total incomprehension of the meaning as much as of the merit of the music they hear. Having no sympathy with those who go to such performances in the wake of fashion expecting to see their friends and, still better, to be seen by them, none with those who, devoid of love for music, would be considered musical, we must honour those who, believing in the beauty they cannot perceive, impelled by a faith in what is beyond their present sense, seek to cultivate this sense by careful exercise, and to educate their ears to the discernment of art qualities, for the discrimination of which they have no technical knowledge. There is something closely bordering on affectation in the habit of name-worship, whence few of us can wholly escape. Many a one professes insight into the beauty of music which he knows to be by Beethoven, who would hear it with indifference and find it totally charmless if he knew not who was its author, or supposed this to be one of inconsiderable repute. So long as humanity is human this habit will, and perhaps must, prevail; it is an expansion of a feeling which prompts stronger interest in the doings of our friends than of strangers, and the great artist who has won the world's love and our own by the excellence of his performances has a claim akin to that of friendship upon our

regard. Let us beware, however, of confiding to a noted name all our power to be pleased, and let us frankly believe in beauty upon its own evidence, rather than wait for the index of an author's name or the direction of a public journal before we admit even self-acknowledgment of pleasure in a work or in its execution.

One needs scarcely dilate on the false taste of ascribing all and only interest to manipulative agility. The mechanical powers of the barrel pianofortes that now-a-days haunt our streets equal in volubility and exceed in certainty the daringest feats of digital dexterity, and it must surely be a degradation of intellectual faculties if we seek only to acquire the excellence of a machine. It is manifest, however, that the mind must have means for its expression, that the voice or the fingers are these means, and that their capability, being artificial, must be matured if not originated by cultivation.

Sincerity is a main element of taste. He evinces better taste who likes a simple melody and owns he likes it, than he who contemns what he cannot understand, and professes admiration for merit he cannot penetrate. Taste is forever progressive and may attain, through long experience, to heights which at life's beginning were out of reach and even out of sight. A different class of music will cheer the nursery from that which brings rapture to the cell of the student; in every grade between these extremes may be vulgarity or refinement, and in our rendering of it to the hearing of others may be the vanity of personal display, or the self-abnegation that has no aim but to vivify the author. Trustful search for the beautiful quickens the power for its perception; from stage to stage of our career our field of taste widens, and the larger our capacity for enjoyment the more indulgent becomes our toleration for things comparatively trifling, and for persons to whom such are the only source of pleasure.

## OUR MUSICAL PROSPECTS.

At this season of retrospect it cannot be out of place to look back upon the public amusements of 1880 with a view to gather from them the very important lessons they are able to convey. That a man may be known by the company he keeps has passed into a proverb; but it is not more true than that people may be judged by their relaxations. When a truce has been called in the struggle of life, and every combatant is free to seek refreshment and solace in his own way, the real individuality comes out, and he who would know the prevailing character of English tastes, or estimate the measure of English culture, will find both writ large in the public places devoted to entertainment. The field is a vast one, not to be taken in at a glance, still less brought within the limits of a few paragraphs. We must, therefore, confine our present remarks to a portion of it, and surely if there be any form of relaxation more worthy of precedence than another, it is that in which music plays the principal part. We shall not insist that music is an indispensable auxiliary to well-nigh every amusement, or that it is the art which beyond all other enters into our homes and lives, though these are great facts, having a significance not easily overrated. It will suffice if we look only at music in its independent and public aspect, especially those phases of it which concern more or less the masses of the people. In doing this with reference to the past year, it is impossible not to be struck by the increased and truly wonderful activity displayed. There have, of course, been fluctuations. Associations and individual enterprises have perished or taken a downward course, but others have sprung up to fill the vacant place, while others yet have lengthened their chords and strengthened their stakes in sign of growing prosperity. On all hands, in town and country alike, we see the great tide of music ever swelling and broadening, covering the dead flats where before stagnation reigned, and diffusing something at least of the sweetness and light which attend a perception of its beauty. Statistics just published indicate the measure of this fact in a very forcible and impressive manner. Thus it appears that in London alone there are more than three thousand professors of music, and no fewer than eight hundred firms engaged in different branches of the music trade, while outside the metropolis fully six thousand persons are, after some fashion or other, devoting their lives to the art. On the same authority we learn that during the last London season seven hundred professional concerts, two hundred performances of Italian opera, and fifty of English opera were given, to which should be added the almost countless list of amateur entertainments, public or semi-public, and a host of "benefits" not usually chronicled. It is stated, moreover, that London boasts of seventy amateur choral or orchestral associations, the number of such societies in the provinces being set down—under the mark, we believe—at three hundred. These figures indicate beyond all chance of mistake the existence of prodigious musical activity. There is no smoke without



fire; and we need not pursue the inquiry any farther in order to have warrant for concluding that the English public are at this time more under the influence of music than ever, that they devote themselves more than ever to its study and practice, and spend upon it an amount of money which will compare favourably with the outlay, for a like purpose, of any recognized musical people.

Upon all this we have a right to congratulate ourselves, but it scarcely goes far enough. The vital question is—Are we improving in musical taste? That the enterprise and vitality just indicated by no means necessarily imply advance from the lower to the higher things of art is certain. A wheel may revolve with never so much rapidity, but if it turn upon a fixed axis there can be no progress. Hence the numbers of professors, concerts, publishers, societies, and so on, though significant to a certain extent, leave the main question undecided. We sincerely wish it were in our power to settle that question, from other data, in a satisfactory sense. But we do not see that this is possible, because when comparing the indications of musical taste during the past year with those of a time long anterior, the signs of real advance are depressingly few and faint. It is scarcely necessary to trouble ourselves about the art of so-called music-halls, since it does not rise much above that of the minstrels of the middle ages, while as regards poetic interest it is far lower. The harper of the chivalric days may have been, like his modern representative, a very poor musician, but his subject was often heroic. He, at any rate, sang of brave deeds and knightly devotion, leaving to a later time the apotheosis of "Champagne Charley," and the hero of "La-di-da." It is, however, needless to enter upon comparisons of this sort. In neither case does music appear as more than a subordinate element—a mere vehicle for the easy transmission of verse. No doubt the art of the music-hall, such as it is, faithfully reflects the taste of those who patronise it, and we shall look in vain to commercial speculators for any effort to raise the taste, so long as the easier course of letting it alone pays. On what, then, have we to depend for improvement among the lower strata of the public? Unhappily, there is not much. When the Government has made up its dubious mind about teaching music properly in elementary schools, instead of squandering money on mere sing-song by ear, there may be hope for the next generation. Yet, even for the present, something is possible with little effort. We have always splendid military bands in London and the larger towns. Why are they not used as means—and very efficient means—of culture, instead of leaving to private enterprise the furnishing of here and there an open-air concert, keenly enjoyed, no doubt, by crowds who are disposed to be thankful for small mercies, yet altogether inadequate to a great end? Why, again, has not every municipality in England its town band, playing in parks and open spaces during the summer months, and diffusing innocent pleasure while gradually elevating the taste of the masses? The Corporation of London started a musical academy during the past year, the benefit of which, we are told, is now being enjoyed by three hundred students. Against this step not a word can be said, and for having established a most valuable precedent the premier municipal body deserves honour. If, however, the City Fathers would organise an efficient band and set it playing in Victoria Park, to the thousands who flock thither when the days are long and warm, we venture to think that results equally good, if not better, might be expected.

It is altogether a mistake to suppose that the so-called "lower classes" are either insensible to music, or incapable of deriving benefit from its sweet teachings, and among the reproaches of our social arrangements may be counted the indifference practically shown, not only to their wants, but to their wishes in this respect. Surely the lives of hard-working men and women in great towns are prosaic and unlovely enough to call for the public provision of that which can cheaply and efficiently cheer them! This reflection brings us, as a matter of duty, to acknowledge the efforts of many distinguished amateurs who, in London, have gone down among the people as musical missionaries, preaching the gospel of a refined and elevating enjoyment. Here we see a bright spot amid the gloom, and one the more pleasant to look upon because the experience of those who have taken part in the enterprise goes to show that the seed sown often falls on good ground. A disposition exists, in some quarters, to mock at these doings—to call the movement a "fad," taken up as a new form of killing time and destined to be soon abandoned for something else. We, however, trust that neither flippant satire on the one hand, nor ill-natured grumblings on the other, will check the development of a most valuable idea, the action of which through the year just ended may be traced like a ray of light in a dark place. Let it not be supposed that because we dwell upon these matters, less than a proper estimate is set upon others of a higher order. Amateurs and dilettanti may be left to take care of themselves; and so may the art of music, when, in anything like a worthy form, it appeals to the general mind. Of far greater moment is it to keep before the public

the great fact that the "divine art," which, with all its humanising and purifying influences, can be brought to bear upon the people so easily, is for missionary purposes turned to very poor account indeed. If we wish to lift the taste of the masses above the ribald or stupid ditties that, for lack of better, now meet with favour, it is needful to go into the market with a superior article. Lack of custom should not be feared. When the late Mayor of Birmingham, Mr Jesse Collings, threw open the noble Town Hall of the Midland metropolis for a series of concerts, at once cheap, popular, and elevating, the question was not of applicants for admission, but of providing seats enough for the working folk who crowded to enjoy the treat. Every such enterprise increases pressure upon the lever by which public taste is to be raised above coarse vulgarity, and a foundation laid for the true musical culture which neither England, nor any other country, can now be said to possess.—D. T.

#### THE MOSES MONTEFIORE TESTIMONIAL FUND.

(From the "Jewish Chronicle," July 23rd, 1875.)

"On Thursday evening a concert in connection with the above-named object was given by the 'Orpheus Orchestral Society.' The vocalists announced were Mdme Estelle Emrick, one of our best contraltos, and Signor Rizzelli, a well-known Italian tenor, who was to have sung Salaman's setting of Horace's 23rd ode, 'Ad Chloen' (To Chloë), but who, from indisposition, was unable to appear. Mdme Estelle Emrick, with rich voice and cultivated taste, sang Charles Salaman's song, 'Lov'd One;' Samuel Lover's Irish song, 'What will you do, Love?' and Rossini's hacknied cavatina, 'Una voce poco fa.' Why will professional vocalists continue to sing such worn-out productions at concerts? Mr Salaman accompanied the vocal music. The chief attraction was unquestionably the performances of the 'Orpheus Orchestral Society.' The band, complete in every department, is a compact body of 40 first rate non-professional instrumentalists, who are most ably conducted by Mr George Ashmead, himself a talented amateur musician. Von Suppe's overture to *Poet and Peasant*, Wallace's overture to *Maritana*, a selection from Gounod's *Faust*, and Mozart's ever-fresh overture to *Figaro* were performed with a degree of unity and spirit that would have reflected credit upon any orchestra, and which demonstrated an improved state of musical culture amongst English amateurs highly creditable to this country. We cannot forbear to draw attention to the excellent playing of Mr Beddome on the clarinet, of Mr Gates on the oboe, Mr Graham Browne on the flute, and of Dr W. H. Stone on the bassoon. Mr Lewis's violoncello solo in the first overture was specially noticeable. It was an error of judgment to combine the concert with the 'Fancy Bazaar.' It should have ended before the concert began; for it was not possible to insist upon that perfect silence which is so desirable on all occasions during a musical performance. The noisy conversation at the end of the room, which often disturbed the music, and the temper of the attentive listeners, was not occasioned by ill-breeding—which is too frequently observable at evening musical parties—but was the inevitable consequence of circumstances which, out of respect to the musicians engaged, and the dignity of the art of which they were the exponents, should not have been permitted."—WRITTEN BY CHARLES K. SALAMAN.

Compare with the foregoing a notice in the "Musical World," Jan. 15, 1881, page 41, column 2, headed: "Sir Moses Montefiore Testimonial Fund," signed "From an Occasional Correspondent."

[The comparison has been made and to what purpose? Why Rossini's brilliant and melodious cavatina should not be included in a far sublimer programme is beyond the conception of (evidently) "An Occasional Correspondent," and (assuredly) of

Dr Blüthgen.]

OFFENBACH'S NEW OPERA.—The rehearsals of Offenbach's posthumous opera, *Les Contes d'Hoffman*, in which the prolific composer, it is said, intended to take ample revenge for the failure of his still-remembered *Barkouf*, produced many years ago at the same theatre, and mercilessly criticised by Berlioz, are occupying almost exclusive attention at the Opéra Comique, M. Carvalho being determined to afford it every chance of success. This is but just, Offenbach having set his heart upon the work, which he was confident would be accepted as his masterpiece. The orchestration, left incomplete, has been filled up by M. Ernest Guiraud, composer of *Piccolino*, an English version of which (by Mr Henry Hersee) was brought out during Mr Carl Rosa's term of occupation at Her Majesty's Theatre. M. Jules Barbier, too, has made certain additions and alterations found necessary to the dramatic action.—Graphic.

## "THE STORY OF PHILOSOPHY."\*

When did the "story" begin, and when will it end—who knows? Since man first thought, the themes Whence, Why, and Where have never been without heroes, and, alas! never without victims. The blank stare of the cradled infant, absorbing the forms of all things new, and the trembling gaze of the aged, trying to penetrate the mists of the grave that hide the brightness of eternal truth, the look both of child and seer tells the same story of unsolved mystery. Since the first utterance of the human intellect till now, the "story" has been increasing, and it is not too much to hope will never stop until the whole earth resounds in full answer to man's enquiry. True it is, pauses long and dreary, have been made, and at times the thread of the "story" seemed as lost as the electric current in the snapt Atlantic cable; but shrewd explorers caught up, whilst others unravelled and joined the entangled and broken thread. The "story" was in Greece in full cry for some hundreds of years before Angels were heard in Palestine adding their mighty volume to man's uncertain and unsatisfying strains. That long period of Greek recital has been chosen for examination and review by the author of the work under notice.

"The Story of Philosophy" is told in a biographical form, and according to chronological order, commencing with Thales (B.C. 640), and extending down the ages to the Stoic Posidonius, teacher of the renowned Roman patriot, Cato, and friend of the celebrated Cicero. Passing rapidly over the period occupied by "the forerunners," the "story" halts to extend its proportions when approaching the lives of the three greatest heroes of ancient philosophy, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Not that the founders of the preceding Schools are neglected; for the first figure that emerges out of the darkness begotten of barbaric ignorance and gross religion, the thinker who started the hypothesis that the First Cause was Water, the venerated Thales is described, considering the distance of time and paucity of materials, as he lived and taught amongst men. Neither is the truly noble Pythagoras slighted by the author. How the mighty thinker, leaving Materialism, recognised Number as the One Cause, how he worked out the doctrine of the Transmigration of the Soul, how he formed a sect called the Italian, and what was the influence exerted by that Society, all these matters receive vivid description and sensible comment. The character of Heraclitus, the weeping philosopher, is also given with point and force, and especial attention is called to the comprehensiveness of his theories, which subsequently were developed into two Schools of thought, Pantheism and Stoicism. In lively colours are shown the witty sayings and gay doings of Democritus, the laughing philosopher, who made the Atomic theory the corner-stone of his system, and who, it is said, considered "love as a sort of epilepsy, and children nuisances," but who, nevertheless, lived to the age of 104 years. With still more enthusiasm the author treats of Empedocles, the preacher of the gospel of Almighty love—the Eternal power that directed all things. The philosopher carried this theory into practice, "by dowering many poor girls that they might marry the men they loved."

The story of philosophy, however, has hitherto been but as a prologue to the drama in three parts under the headings Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Upon the history of these heroes of antiquity the author has spent his full force. The life of each is drawn in fuller detail, and the doctrines of each are not only more elaborately discussed, but also their effects upon character, as exemplified in the lives of their promulgators, more surely tracked. Our author seems to divest himself of the garb of the unbiassed historian, and to assume the trappings of a hero worshipper. The story grows in magnitude and glows with loving ardour. Socrates, as soldier, teacher, and civil officer, is set before the reader as one of the few men in history worthy of entire admiration. His heroic life, and more heroic death, are recorded in language, which applied to other men would be hyperbole, but the bearing of the lofty being certainly justifies, yea, more than warrants the brilliant halo thrown around the brows of

this plain featured man. In the chapters allotted to Socrates are found some excellent descriptive writing. At the commencement of Chapter VI. the reader will meet with a graphic sketch of Athens as it was when "the ugly young sculptor" worked at his father's craft. In Chapter VII. an Athenian home in banquetting time is capably depicted; and above all in Chapter VIII. the death of Socrates is pictured with touches of exquisite feeling, and true manly power. Plato, with his intense ideality, seems to be held by our author in less admiration than his predecessor. Nevertheless, the Chapters X., XI., and XII. allotted to Plato, perhaps the most exalted name in Greek literature, are replete with interest. They certainly contain more lucid information concerning his teachings and writings, than is to be found elsewhere in the book concerning the work of other Masters. But hero worship is resumed in the chapters devoted to Aristotle, wherein the intrinsic value of his never-to-be-surpassed methods of thought is gratefully acknowledged, and the influence of his teachings, upon Alexander of Macedon in particular, and the world in general, is graciously recorded. There is an admirable chapter on the Epicureans, and another on their opponents the Stoics, wherein the antagonistic principles are fairly set forth. After a brief record of the New Academy, and the secessions therefrom, the work concludes with some highly philosophical remarks.

Without dwelling upon the years of research necessary to gain such an intimacy with Greek literature, as the author shows he possesses, and without mentioning the ability with which facts are marshalled, or the facility with which ideas are expressed, reference, however, should in fairness be made to the distinguishing feature of the work, which is intense love of the subject chosen for treatment. Over slips of the pen, and errors of construction, the reader is carried by the force of a passionate enthusiasm, a power which lights up a subject generally considered dreary, and kindles in readers a desire to know more, and still more, of "The Story of Philosophy."

PENCERDD GWFFYN.

## SARAH BERNHARDT'S NARROW ESCAPE.

(Another Account.)

During the last act of *La Dame aux Camélias* at the Globe Theatre, last evening, as Mdle Sarah Bernhardt reclined upon a sofa on the left of the stage, a large imitation mirror, set above a mantel against the flat behind her, toppled over. In its fall it knocked off a lighted lamp, a French clock, a tea-set on a salver, several vases and other articles, all of which were smashed to pieces, followed, in their descent, by the heavy mantel. Mdle Bernhardt, on hearing the first crash, sprang on her feet with extraordinary promptitude (for a moribund heroine), and thus escaped injury. Many of the audience rose from their seats, the ladies screamed, and the stage was quickly filled with actors and actresses, anxious to learn if their bright "star" had been injured. The curtain was rung down at Mdle Bernhardt's suggestion, the stage quickly cleared, and in a few minutes the audience was loudly applauding the lady, who had resumed her place and taken up the scene from the point at which it had been so abruptly broken off. The crowded and brilliant audience exhibited more than ordinary enthusiasm, and the performance of Mdle Bernhardt was a triumph from the first scene to the last. —(Correspondence.)

HERR ALFRED BLUME has returned from Hanover, where he had been engaged in training some of the singers at the Royal Operahouse, to the perfect satisfaction of the trained, the trainer, and the public.

THE first of a series of five organ recitals at the Holborn Town Hall was given on Tuesday, January 18th inst. The following is the programme:—

Adagio and Polonaise, *Faust* (Spohr); Adagio—Symphony No. 1 (Haydn); Organ Sonata, No. 5 (Mendelssohn); Humorous variations on a German air (Siegfried Ochs); Andante in A (H. Smart); Aria—Suite in D (J. S. Bach); Overture, *William Tell* (Rossini.)

The organist was Mr E. H. Turpin. During the evening Mr J. T. Hutchinson sang Virginia Gabriel's "Cleansing Fires," Vincent Wallace's "Bellringer," and "Tis jolly to hunt," from Sir W. Sterndale Bennett's *May Queen*. There was a very full attendance. On Tuesday the 25th, the second organ recital is announced to be given, when the organist will be Mr C. J. Frost, and the vocalist, Miss Amy Dicksee.

\* "The Story of Philosophy." By Aston Leigh. Turner & Co.

## TO CUNINGHAM BOOSEY, ESQ.

SIRRAH,—By no means. Herleus le Berbeus was the hero to whom your correspondent playfully alludes. One day, King Arthur, feeling sick, pitched his pavilion in a hard-bye wood. As that monarch slept he was roused by the snorting of a horse and the piteous bewailings of a captain. The captain was Herleus le Berbeus, a good knight of his hands. Balin (who, like Sigmund, drew out the sword, but must not be confounded with his brother, Balan, of the "Two Swerdes"), at a hint from King Arthur, went in quest of Herleus, and "fet" him. While retracing their horse-steps, Herleus was smitten through both thighs by Garlon, a traitorous knight, riding invisible—brother to King Pelles. This Garlon, at a feast, in a castle, smote Balin on the left cheek; whereupon, Balin stert up, incontinent, and slew him with a trenchant-blade—just as Gawaine, Gaheris, and Agrawaine slew Pellinore, who had slain King Lot of Orkney, at a battle in which Kings Ban, Bors, and Lot, conjoined with the Duke of Dutchmen and Sir Chastelayne, a "childe" (whereof was made great dole), fought against King Arthur. The death of Garlon had something to do with important matters, including the "dolorous stroke," the depopulation of countries, much extended tray and teene, the death of Garnish of the Mount, the fatal encounter between Balin and Balan (of the "Swerdes"), and, ultimately, the quest of the Sangreal. Consult the book of Merlin, and you will be convinced.—Yours,

PETIPACE OF WINCHELSEA.

[The battle in which the Duke of Dutchmen came "leaping out of a wood" and Sir Chastelayne gave up the ghost was not against Kings Lot, Ban and Bors, but against "Sir Lucius," Emperor of Rome, when King Arthur devastated Italy, and slew a giant on a hill—"the fiercest he ever fought withal except one upon Mount Araby"—but still fiercer, or, as some will have it, "better breathed."—Dr Blinck.]

## ROYAL MUSICAL SCHEMES.

(From the "Citizen.")

Certain august members of the Royal Family are busy again in the cause of musical education. There is another important move on the board, and it is apparently on the point of being made. In July of the past year His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales presented a petition to the Queen in Council, praying that a charter of Incorporation might be granted towards the formation of a Royal College of Music. In this college it was proposed to include the National Training School at South Kensington, in order that the latter might "have its sphere of action extended," and that an establishment "should be formed on a more permanent and extended basis than any existing institutions." From certain rumours that are flying about, and articles that are appearing in various journals, it would appear that the moment for putting this scheme into execution is not very far off. At any rate, the subject is undergoing serious consideration, with a view to its merits being well digested and comprehended by the time the period for action is at hand. Meanwhile, to guard against unforeseen hitches, the authorities of the South Kensington Training School have taken care to secure their yearly contribution of £200 from the Corporation, which was granted a few days back without the least allusion to the proposed new college. The scholarships subscribed by the various companies will, we presume, follow in due course.

Now this matter concerns us somewhat. We are just waking in the city to a sense of the importance attaching to musical cultivation, and more has been heard of it lately than at any previous period in the history of the Metropolis. Let us glance, then, lightly over the events that have led to the present position of affairs. In 1875, when the South Kensington School was formed, the Duke of Edinburgh and Prince Christian took in hand the raising of funds in the City, and we know how well they succeeded. The school started in promising style, and soon the Prince of Wales took such deep interest in its progress that in less than a couple of years his Royal Highness hit upon a project for enlarging it into a much grander concern. A meeting took place at Marlborough House, and it was proposed to amalgamate the South Kensington Training School with the Royal Academy of Music, and form them into a "Royal College of Music." The Principal of the Academy promised to consider the matter with his colleagues, and did so, many stormy discussions taking place at more than one of which the Duke of Edinburgh attended, in the hope of bringing matters to a favourable

issue. But he did not succeed. After a delay of over two years the Academy made up its mind to refuse the offer of coalition, and the idea was finally abandoned. In the meantime the pupils of the Training School made their first appearance in public at the Mansion House, and acquitted themselves in so fairly creditable a manner that folks flattered themselves the young institution was flourishing as well as its best friends could wish. So that when the Academy refusal ultimately went forth it was not regarded with deep sorrow by any but the South Kensington officials, who had been hungering for a share of the financial prosperity enjoyed at Tenterden Street. Whether the Prince of Wales altogether gave up the notion of carrying out the project he had entertained we cannot say, but certainly nothing more was heard of it for a time. Suddenly, however, it oozed out that the last annual examination of the South Kensington scholars had resulted in a very unfavourable report; that the school was not in such an efficient condition as it might be, and some of the examiners went so far as to say that many students had "retrograded instead of making progress." This was a serious state of affairs; and coming, as it did, from examiners of the highest ability and integrity, the report could not fail to create an extremely unpleasant feeling in the minds of the illustrious patrons of the School. The above-mentioned request for a Charter was soon afterwards presented, and we are inclined to think that, after reading the report, the Royal petitioner formed a strong opinion as to the expediency of promoting musical instruction through some more efficiently-conducted and influential medium than the South Kensington Training School.

We have not, of course, the space at command for entering at once into details respecting the proposed college. As an able writer on this matter said the other day, "The one thing necessary for the present is to well establish the idea that we must have one," for which precise reason we have traced the progress up till now of the first musical school which has received direct and substantial help from the Corporation of London. We do not wish to assert that the movement has proved a failure. Neither can it be said that it is turning out so successful as was anticipated. But the South Kensington establishment is decidedly under suspicion, and the very fact is sufficient to make us regard with satisfaction the proposition of founding a Royal College of Music. Such an institution would command the aid of a yearly subsidy from Government, and consequently receive the benefit of partial Government supervision. It would enjoy the advantage of affording a perfectly free musical education to all possessing natural talent and unable to pay fees. Its staff of professors would consist entirely of able instructors, who would be placed on an equality with each other, and the principal would be a man capable of devoting his whole time to his duties. It is impossible to overrate the benefits that must accrue from the existence of a college of this description, formed, in fact, on the lines of the best foreign conservatoires; and we heartily trust that the scheme of the Prince of Wales may be put into execution with celerity and success. In giving expression to this wish, we do not forget the claims of the Royal Academy, nor the undeniable utility of the Guildhall School for Music; but a tyro in such matters must perceive in the founding of a National Musical College the means of giving, as no self-supporting institutions can, complete and universal advantages for the study of a noble and ennobling Art.

[Doubtful. Think of the deluge of mediocrity for which we are indebted to the Paris, Leipsic, and other foreign *Conservatoires*.—Dr Blinck.]

THE SISTERS SARAH AND JEANNE BERNHARDT.—Mlle Jeanne Bernhardt, the great Sarah's sister, arrived here to-day, from Havre, in the French steamship "Labrador." She was met by M<sup>me</sup> Guarard, Sarah's *gouvernante*, who came on last evening from Boston. Jeanne said that she had been dreadfully sea-sick, and that the companion she had brought with her had been of no earthly use. Anxious, before all, to embrace her dear sister, she proceeded, the morning after her arrival at New York, to Boston, stopping for the night at the Albermarle. Jeanne resembles her sister in a striking degree. The two are about the same height; their figures and faces are similar, but to Sarah must be awarded the brighter eye and the daintier mouth; nor has the elder the slightly flushed and dimpled cheeks of her enchanting sister. Again, Sarah has the more musical voice. Jeanne Bernhardt was dressed in a Devonshire hat, surmounted by a huge imitation cockle-shell (a marvel of millinery art), her body being enshrouded in a cloak of olive green, ornamented with expensive fur, reaching down to her feet and completely hiding her dress from view.—Correspondence of the "Boston Herald."



## BEETHOVEN'S LATER YEARS.\*

(Continued from page 28.)

It is really a remarkable fact that in his *Memoirs* Goethe does not once mention Beethoven's name. The only occasion of reference being made to the master is in a letter addressed to Zelter, director of the Berlin Sing-Academie, for whom Goethe felt esteem, a fact which only his want of musical taste can explain. Here is what he wrote to Zelter from Carlsbad, under date of the 2nd September, 1812, that is to say, a few days after the adventure we have narrated:—

"At Teplitz I made the acquaintance of Beethoven; his talent astonished me prodigiously; unfortunately, he is an untamable being. He considers the world a detestable invention. His point of view is perhaps just, but it is not calculated to render life more tolerable to himself and those with whom he associates. We must, however, excuse and pity him, for he is completely losing his hearing, a misfortune more prejudicial to him as affecting his relations to society than even to his art. Already very laconic by disposition, he will become still more so through this calamity."

Yet this untamable being, this clown, this boor, could occasionally draw in his claws, as evidenced by the following charming note to a virtuosa of ten years old, who had written to express her admiration and begging his acceptance of a pocket book she had embroidered for him:—

"My good and dear Emily, my dainty little friend, you have been kept waiting for the answer to your letter. A host of things to be done and my continuous indisposition must be my excuse; my presence, moreover, here, at Teplitz, whither I came to set my shattered health right again, proves sufficiently that I am not using a mean evasion.

"Do not tear their laurel wreath from Handel, Haydn, and Mozart, to offer it me, my dear child; they are a thousand times more worthy of it than I am. As for your pocket book, I shall preserve it with other tokens of esteem which I have not yet sufficiently deserved.

"Continue to work; do not be contented with studying music superficially, but endeavour to penetrate into its secrets. It is worth the effort, for it is art and science alone which can raise us to what is divine.

"If you form a wish which I can satisfy, my dear Emily, apply frankly to me; a true artist does not disdain the humble. As he knows, art is infinite and has no limits; in the darkness surrounding him, he feels only too well the enormous distance separating him from his goal. Consequently, while others admire him, he himself grieves and mourns at not being able to reach those sublime regions where, from afar, he beholds the bright sun shine which it is the dream of his genius to conquer.

"Of course I would gladly come and see you, for I prefer begging the hospitality of your modest house than that of many an opulent noble whose heart frequently conceals naught but poverty. If ever I come to H. . . you may rely on my taking refuge with your family. In my eyes, men possess no superiority but such as virtue assures them. I love to be among good honest folk, for then I am happy!"

What would Goethe have said, had he known the above! Would he not have been obliged to confess that the wild beast whom he had beheld springing fiercely about, could, if necessary, be very gentle. As for me, when I see Beethoven adopt so kindly a tone and soften down the thunders of his voice to the most delicate harmony, I fancy I hear Bottom claiming the most contrary parts in the cast of *Pyramus and Thisbe*: "Let me play the lion, too; I will roar, that I will do any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar, that I will make the Duke say: 'Let him roar again, let him roar again.'" Whereto Quince replies: "An you should do it too terribly, you would fright the Duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek; and that were enough to hang us all." "I grant you, friends," rejoins Bottom, "if that you should fright the ladies out of their wits, they would have no more discretion but to hang us; but I will aggravate my voice so that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove; I will roar you an 'twere any nightingale."†

## THE EIGHTH SYMPHONY.

In the last days of 1813, the *Vienna Gazette* published the following notice signed: Beethoven.

"The desire expressed by a large number of those fond of musical art to hear once more my grand symphonic composition on the vic-

\* From *Le Ménestrel*.† *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act I., Sc. 2.

tory gained by Wellington at Vittoria, renders it my agreeable duty to announce that, on Sunday, the 2nd January, I shall have the honour of giving a performance of the work with the best artists of Vienna in the large hall of the Redout. The concert, which will be for my benefit, will comprise, also, several recently composed vocal pieces and choruses."‡

The vocal pieces added to the programme to replace Mälzel's mechanical trumpet, Beethoven having quarreled with the inventor, were taken from *The Ruins of Athens*, then a novelty for Vienna. They consisted of the Triumphal March with chorus, and final bass air, sung at Pesth as the bust of the Emperor rose up on its pedestal. Beethoven thought of reproducing this stage effect, at least approximately, by means of a curtain which, on being raised, would enable the audience, from whom till then it would have been concealed, to see the bust. The day previous to the concert, that is to say, the 1st January, he wrote a humorous note to Zmeskall on the subject:

"My dear and worthy friend, all would go well, had he but a curtain. Without one, my air will prove a null. This morning, for the first time, I learned we had none, and I am in despair. We must have a curtain, though it be merely a bed-curtain; a screen, a veil, anything you like! The air is written for the stage rather than the concert-room. Without a curtain, its dramatic character will be literally lost, lost, lost! All the effect will go to the deuce. The Court will probably come. The Arch-Duke Charles gave me an audience and promised to attend; the Empress has not said: Yes, but neither has she said: No. A curtain! I ask it in Heaven's name, for, without it, to-morrow my air and I are ruined. I press you to my heart as affectionately this new year as I did in the one just past. Yours ever, with a curtain or without."

I do not know whether the grave question of the curtain received a satisfactory solution, but there is one thing certain: most of the eminent artists who took part in the first concert were again at their post. Salieri, however, was absent, and it was Hummel who filled his place. Thanks to this, young Meyerbeer passed from the cymbals to the big drum, a piece of rapid promotion, foreboding evidently the brilliant prospects awaiting the future author of *Les Huguenots*. The concert proved doubly successful; it was a success for the composer as well as a success financially. The large room of the Redout was capable of holding about five thousand persons. Moreover, the special arrangement of the platform, flanked as it was by long corridors, permitted a satisfactory realism to be given to the musical stage-arrangements of the "Battle of Vittoria"; the opposing armies approached, engaged, and combated implacably with each other, with a picturesque dash in which the public seemed to behold the representation of a real action. Feeling he was becoming the fashion, Beethoven gave another concert on the 27th February following, when he caused to be performed for the first time the Eighth Symphony, terminated at Linz amid the domestic quarrels of which we have been witnesses. It appears to have met with a somewhat cool welcome. The following is what the *General Gazette of Music* says regarding the event:

"The attention of the audience at this concert was especially centred on the new production of Beethoven's muse, but the hopes formed of it were not completely realised. It was received without those demonstrations of enthusiasm wherewith the public usually greet compositions which at once find favour with them; in a word, it did not, as the Italians say, create a *furor*."

VICTOR WILDER.

(To be continued.)

FLORENCE.—Anteri-Manzocchi's *Stella* has proved a success in Florence. The cast included Mdlle Derivis, M. Maurel, and Sig. Mozzi. Marino Mancinelli conducted. The composer, in conformity with the custom still prevalent in Italy, was called on twenty-six times, and some of the artists almost as many. (Twice as many—Dr. Blüdt.)

BRUSSELS.—On the occasion of the marriage of the Princess Stéphanie and the Crown-Prince Rudolph of Austria, M. Lintermans, President-Director of the vocal association called the *Artisans Réunis*, will take his singers to Vienna at a cost of from 40,000 to 50,000 francs, to be disbursed at his own expense.

‡ The performance thus announced was the third; the first, on the 8th December, 1813, had been followed very quickly by a second, in the same locality, on Sunday, the 12th December.

## ST JAMES'S HALL.

## MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS,

TWENTY-THIRD SEASON, 1880-81.

DIRECTOR—MR S. ARTHUR CHAPPELL.

## NINETEENTH CONCERT OF THE SEASON,

MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 1881,

At Eight o'clock precisely.

## Programme.

PART I.—Quartet, in A minor, Op. 29, for two violins, viola, and violoncello (Schubert)—M<sup>me</sup> Norman-Néruda, M<sup>m</sup>. L. Ries, Straus, and Piatti; Song, "Where'er you walk" (Handel)—Mr Frank Boyle; Variations in C minor, for pianoforte alone (Beethoven)—Miss Dora Schirmacher.

PART II.—Sonata, in D major, for violin, with pianoforte accompaniment (Handel)—M<sup>me</sup> Norman-Néruda; Songs, "The first violet" (Mendelssohn) and "Piercing eyes" (Haydn)—Mr Frank Boyle; Trio, in G major, Op. 9, No. 1, for violin, viola, and violoncello (Beethoven)—M<sup>me</sup> Norman-Néruda, Herr Straus, and Signor Piatti. Accompanist—Mr Zerbini.

## NINTH AFTERNOON CONCERT,

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 1881,

At Three o'clock precisely.

## Programme.

Quartet, in C major, Op. 59, No. 3, for two violins, viola, and violoncello (Beethoven)—M<sup>me</sup> Norman-Néruda, M<sup>m</sup>. L. Ries, Straus, and Piatti; Song, "O swallow, swallow" (Piatti)—Mr Santley, violoncello *obligato*—Signor Piatti; Sonata, in A flat, Op. 24, for pianoforte alone (Beethoven)—M<sup>lle</sup> Marie Krebs; Song, "Maid of Athens" (Gounod)—Mr Santley; Quintet, in C minor, Op. 16, for pianoforte, violin, viola, violoncello, and contrabass (Goetz)—M<sup>lle</sup> Marie Krebs, M<sup>me</sup> Norman-Néruda, M<sup>m</sup>. Straus, Reynolds, and Piatti. Accompanist—Mr Zerbini.

## MR FRANK J. AMOR.

A FEW Friends of Mr F. J. AMOR are raising a Fund to enable him to proceed to America, where he will have a much greater opportunity of exercising his talents than is possible in this country.

About £150 is necessary, towards which the following sums have been subscribed:—

	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Professor Macfarren ...	5 5 0	J. W. Standen, Esq. ...	1 1 0
Stanley Lucas, Esq. ...	1 1 0	A. Burnett, Esq. ...	1 1 0
H. R. Evers ...	2 2 0	D. Godfrey, Esq. ...	1 1 0
P. Sinton, Esq. ...	5 5 0	C. Harper, Esq. ...	1 1 0
R. Evers, Esq. ...	1 1 0	E. Lockwood, Esq. ...	1 1 0
W. H. Cummings, Esq. ...	5 5 0	W. H. Holmes, Esq. ...	1 1 0
F. Westlake, Esq. ...	1 1 0	G. Horton, Esq. ...	0 10 6
C. E. Stephens, Esq. ...	1 1 0	O. Svendsen, Esq. ...	0 10 6
T. A. Wallworth, Esq. ...	2 2 0	C. Gardner, Esq. ...	0 10 6
Dr Skinner ...	5 5 0	H. O. Lunn, Esq. ...	0 10 6
A. O'Leary, Esq. ...	0 10 6	A Friend ...	2 2 0
H. Lazarus, Esq. ...	1 1 0	A Friend ...	1 10 0
W. H. Tinney, Esq. ...	1 1 0	Mr J. W. Davison ...	2 2 0
Charles Santley, Esq. ...	5 5 0	Mr W. Duncan Davison ...	2 2 0
Walter Macfarren, Esq. ...	1 1 0		

The kind co-operation of amateur and professional musicians is respectfully solicited towards completing the necessary amount. Subscriptions can be forwarded to Mr H. R. EYRES (Hon. Treasurer), at the Royal Academy of Music; or to Messrs Stanley Lucas, Weber & Co., 81, New Bond Street.

## DEATH.

On Wednesday, January 19, at 207, Adelaide Road, N.W., LILY EMILY AUGUSTA, the eldest daughter of GEORGE AUGENER, Esq.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

FRANKFORT-ON-MAINE (the Brothers D---).—Too late, as usual, for this number. There must be snow about. Cart it off to Hombourg and Wiesbaden.

ELISA VOLTINI (once so well known in London) has retired from the lyric stage.

THE theatre at Cronstadt was burnt down on the 7th inst. Seven persons shared the fate of the edifice.

M<sup>lle</sup> ZARÉ THALBERG will visit London professionally this season.

MAX BRUCH was married on the 3rd inst., at Berlin, to M<sup>lle</sup> Clara Tuczek, returning very shortly after the ceremony to the scene of his labours in Liverpool.

A MORMON in New York—so the *Boston Courier* (U.S.) informs us—asked Sarah Bernhardt to give him a family box. "How many are you?" enquired the famous actress. "I have twenty-eight wives and one hundred and sixty-eight children," was the reply. Sarah said she had not a box sufficiently commodious.

TO ADVERTISERS.—The Office of the MUSICAL WORLD is at Messrs DUNCAN DAVISON & Co.'s, 244, Regent Street, corner of Little Argyll Street (First Floor). Advertisements not later than Thursday. Payment on delivery.

## The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 1881.

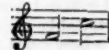
## TO DOCTOR JAUNDICE BILE.

DEAR BILE,—For your criticisms of my works I have all the respect that is due to so impartial a judge; but when it comes to matters of fact, I feel that some line, however elastic, must be drawn. You say I was "ducked" on appearing before the curtain in response to a command from the whole house ("vox populi," &c.)—which statement of yours I am assured, by independent auditors from roof to base, must be a pre-conceived mis-statement, utterly devoid of foundation. It is not for the first time you have drawn from your ink-pot such deliberate untruths to my prejudice. I, therefore, take them *cum grano*. In the course of a life-long study of Natural History, I have never yet been able to come across an authenticated instance of the Leopard changing his spots—a phenomenon, by the way, demanding a greater extension of the Evolution theory than Science, as yet, has succeeded in demonstrating. Nevertheless, I am advised, on authority unimpeachable, that though no leopards (or pards, indeed, of any species) were in the house, there were many ducks, and only a single goose—which goose I take to represent yourself. To be "ducked" by fair ducks is satisfactory to the contemplative mind; to be "goosed" by sham geese is an honour of which even Antar, the Arab chief and "destroyer of horsemen," might feel proud. Let the goose cackle and the ducks mellifluously quack. Sage, onions, and my blessing to both! I am impregnable even to the heel. "Cards" mean Bow Street.

ANTIPATER.

["Then came Shiboob, like a male ostrich." O by Abbs!]

Aus Wölfenbüttel.



## RASOUMOWSKY, ANDREAS KYRILLOVITSCH,

Born October 22, 1752, died September 23, 1836.

Those who have had occasion to know something of the moral atmosphere of the court of Peter, the ship carpenter of Saardam and Czar of all the Russias, will not be surprised to learn that, in the reign of his successor, Catherine I., the magnificent beauty of a singer in the Imperial Chapel, made a conquest of Elisabeth Petrowna, herself afterwards Empress. At that time and place, chastity was a word that conveyed but a vague idea; and love was but lust. Elisabeth called him to her court, and, though by no means true to him, he was her favourite, and when she came to the throne, he was raised by degrees to the highest positions in the State, was ennobled and endowed with estates. He was by birth (1700), a peasant of Lemeschi, a village in the Ukraine, and by name Rasum.

About 1740, he introduced a younger brother, Kyrill, or Cyril, then but twelve years of age, into the Chapel, who, when arrived at manhood, became in like manner the favourite of the Princess, afterwards Empress Catherine II. Both were men of remarkable talents; in the highest degree amiable and noble-minded; who bore their honours with meekness, and as Counts Rasoumowsky remained unscathed amid all the political changes of their time. There is a curious proof of the rapidity with which the new name became known in Europe. Sam Foote, in his farce of *The Liar* (1762), makes young Wilding exclaim: "Oh! how they melt at the Gothic names of General Swappinback, Count Rasoumowsky, Prince Montecuculi, and Marshal Furtinburgh."



Andreas Kyriłowitsch, the fourth son of the younger Rasum, was destined to the Navy, and spent some years in the English service. In 1773 he commanded the frigate which took the bride of Paul—the Czarowitsch—to St Petersburg. An attempted—perhaps successful—intrigue with her, came to the knowledge of the Empress Catherine, who punished the son of her old paramour by dismissing him from the Navy and sending him into exile—as Ambassador to Venice. He represented his Sovereign successively at Venice, Naples, Copenhagen, and Stockholm, becoming famous less by his diplomatic talents than by his enormous prodigality, and his amorous intrigues with women in the higher circles. Queen Caroline of Naples included.

In 1788 Rasoumowsky married, at Vienna, Elisabeth, Countess Thun, sister of Prince Carl Lichnowsky's wife, and, on March 25, 1792, had his audience from the Emperor of Austria, as Russian Ambassador at Court. This post he held almost uninterruptedly for more than twenty years; and when not nominally, was really, perhaps the representative of his Sovereign. True to the traditions of his family, Rasoumowsky was a thorough musician, ranked in Vienna as one of the best players of Haydn's quartets, in which he took the second violin, and which, it is affirmed on what seems good authority, he had studied under the composer himself—a fact in itself not at all improbable.

That Beethoven must have been well known to Rasoumowsky almost from his arrival in Vienna in 1792 seems clear, considering his position with the Count's mother-in-law, Countess Thun, and brother-in-law, Lichnowsky; but there is really no direct evidence to the fact until the order for the Quartets, Op. 59, was given, which were begun by the composer "26th May, 1806," and are known to have been played not later than February, 1807. In 1808 we learn that the Count dwelt in "his own house." This was a magnificent palace, now the Imperial Geological Institute, in the Landstrasse suburb, situated upon the Donau Canal, across which it looked out upon the groves and glades of the Prater. Into its garden Bettine looked down from the tower, or, rather, the belvedere, of the Birkenstock House, whence she wrote the beautiful letter to Goethe on Beethoven.

Rasoumowsky now (summer or early autumn of 1808) engaged Ignaz Schuppanzigh, first violin, Franz Weiss, viola, and Joseph Lincke, violoncello, as permanent members of his Quartet, with assurance of a pension in case of dismissal or superannuation. Weiss and family lived in one of the houses, in the rear of the palace, occupied by the Count's dependents.

Beethoven's dedication of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies (pub. 1809) to Lobkowitz and Rasoumowsky conjointly, prove him to have been largely the recipient of the Count's bounty, but the particulars are not known. From 1808 to 1815 we have the testimony of Seyfried, from personal observation, to the important part played by the composer at the evening concerts in the Rasoumowsky Palace. "Everything that he composed was there rehearsed, hot from the frying-pan, and to a hair, after his own instructions, exact, precisely as he would, and not otherwise than he would have it, with a zeal, a love, an obedience and reverence, which could be felt alone by such glowing admirers of his genius; and it was just this and only this—the profound penetration into the secret intentions, the most perfect comprehension of the spiritual meaning, by which those quartet players gained that universal fame in the production of Beethoven's tone-poems, upon which there was but one opinion in the artist world." Although Schindler could not speak from personal observation, his sources of information were such as to leave no room for doubt that his account of the honours paid the composer in Rasoumowsky's salons in 1815 is correct. It was the time of the Vienna Congress, and the Count (Prince since the 3rd of June), made his palace the scene of extraordinary festivities "to which Beethoven was always invited," and at which all sought to testify to him their profound regard. "By Prince Rasoumowsky he was presented to the assembled monarchs, who in the most flattering terms gave him proofs of their respect." "Not without feeling did the great master afterwards recall those days in the Imperial Palace and that of the Russian Prince, and once, with a certain pride, remarked, that he had allowed the crowned heads to pay court to him, and that he had carried himself thereby proudly." Rasoumowsky had caused a dining room for 700 guests to be annexed to the palace, for these occasions. It was constructed of wood, and on the morning of December 31st, 1815, after a grand

supper, it was destroyed by a fire, which extended to the greater portion of the palace itself. The Emperor of Russia gave 400,000 silver roubles for the re-building of the edifice, a sum which, large as it was, proved insufficient, and the Prince was finally compelled to sell the estate. He soon after pensioned his quartet players, and disappears from musical history.

A. W. THAYER.

Trieste, Jan. 15, 1881.

#### ANOTHER CURIOUS LETTER.

Revere House, C. B. Ferrin, proprietor.

MR MAPLESON,—I am the Editress of a newspaper, and would ask you to give me a complimentary ticket for myself. Please read the enclosed card. If I could see you just two minutes I could explain. I am only thirteen years old, and if you give me a ticket please give me a reserved seat.

EVA O. BRETON.

Boston, Jan. 6, 1881.

#### CONCERTS.

MISS JOSEPHINE AGABEG gave a concert on Monday evening in Steinway Hall, which attracted a large number of her friends and admirers of her talent as a pianist of considerable ability. Miss Agabeg began the concert by playing, with Mr Libotton, Mendelssohn's *Andante con variazioni* in D major (Op. 17), for pianoforte and violoncello. She afterwards gave Beethoven's Sonata in C sharp minor (The "Moonlight"), and, with Mr Ganz, Saint-Saens' Variations for two pianofortes on a theme by Beethoven, which latter resulted in a "call" for both artists. In the second part Miss Agabeg introduced a *Nocturne* by Chopin (Op. 15, No. 2) and a transcription of Mr Ganz's song, "The nightingale's trill," bringing the entertainment to a close with Liszt's Fantasia on *Rigoletto*. After each performance the young pianist obtained hearty and well-merited applause. Miss Agabeg was assisted by Misses Cecilia Fuller and Marion Williams, Messrs James Sauvage and F. Quatremaire. Mdle Bertha Brouil contributed a solo on the violin ("La Fileuse" of Lasserre), and M. Libotton two solos on the violoncello (a Romance by Mendelssohn and a Mazurka of his own composition). Mr W. Ganz and Herr Sigismund Lehmeyer were the accompanists.

AFTER quitting Madrid, Mdme Adelina Patti goes to Nice for two concerts.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE in the Haymarket has narrowly escaped destruction. A fire broke out on Thursday night in one of the rooms of the building, which but for the prompt action of those on the spot, might have been disastrous. As it was, serious damage was done, for the valuable wardrobe of Mr Mapleson seems to be either burnt or irretrievably spoilt by water. Her Majesty's Theatre has been the scene of two great fires. Ninety-two years ago it was burnt down—and in 1867, five years later, being consecrated by Mr Mapleson, it was again destroyed by fire, and after being rebuilt, met with almost as serious a calamity, its affairs going "into Chancery." The outbreak of a fire in a Theatre never occurs without creating an uncomfortable feeling. In spite of Acts of Parliament and the intervention of the Lord Chamberlain, little has been done to protect audiences when fire suddenly lays hold of a part of a Theatre. In not a few places of amusement it would almost seem as if the management, eager to provide seats for as many as possible, made special arrangements for causing their deaths in the event of alarm. On no other hypothesis can the practice of blocking up "gangways" with a "surcroit" of chairs be explained. Perhaps the suggestion of what might have happened had the Theatre been again burnt down, may once more direct the attention of the authorities to this subject. In the present instance the outbreak was due to the over-heating of a flue. But this brings us in presence of another danger, showing that lives may be at any moment imperilled by the negligence of a furnace-man. Again, fires like that on Thursday night are peculiarly dangerous in this weather, the supply of water being difficult when the pipes are frozen.

S - - - - R - - - - R.

## PROVINCIAL.

HAWICK.—An organ performance was given in St John's Church, Hawick, by Sir Herbert Oakeley, Mus. Doc., Oxon., and Professor of Music in the University of Edinburgh, whose visit to Dunse to inaugurate the new organ on the preceding evening affording him a favourable opportunity of doing a similar service for Hawick. Sir Herbert's programme, arranged in chronological order, included the names of eight great masters, from Bach and Handel (both born in 1685) to Mendelssohn (who died in 1847), the last two items being respectively a composition by Sir William Sterndale Bennett and a Festival March by Sir Herbert Oakeley, written for the Duke of Edinburgh, and produced at the Liverpool Festival of 1874. The selection had been carefully considered, so as to give variety and contrast, while suiting all tastes—from Bach and Handel to modern masters. Several pieces—for instance, the "Nightingale" chorus, selections from Mozart, Beethoven, Pleyel, and Mendelssohn, and the Festival March, in which the whole power of the organ was brought out—must have been "popular" even to first hearers. Sterndale Bennett's melodious and graceful movement from his G minor Symphony, full of the poetic fancy always a characteristic of that admired and much regretted English composer, served to show the excellence of Messrs Conacher's "reads." At the conclusion Professor Oakeley was greeted with hearty and general applause.—*Scotsman*.

## L'ALBANI.

(La Gazette de Bruxelles—Jan. 13.)

Le retour de Mme Albani a été fêté avec enthousiasme, avant-hier, à la Monnaie. La salle, fort brillante, a fait un accueil chaleureux et spontané à la grande artiste, si émouvante, si belle dans ce rôle de *Violetta*, qui est, jusqu'à présent, son triomphe.

Elle l'a chanté et joué admirablement, comme elle l'avait chanté et joué l'an dernier, — mieux même. Sa voix semble avoir gagné encore en pureté, et l'art qu'elle met dans les moindres détails de ce rôle, qu'elle "compose" d'une façon si saisissante et si complète, semble encore plus profond, plus parfait qu'il ne l'était il y a quelques mois. Il est certain qu'elle n'avait jamais montré tant de virtuosité dans l'air du premier acte, et qu'elle n'avait jamais fait preuve d'une habileté vocale aussi consommée. Dans tous les quatre actes, elle a eu tour à tour des moments de tendresse, de passion, de douleur pleins de charme et d'émotion, particulièrement dans les deux duos du deuxième acte et dans la grande scène du dernier. Il est impossible d'être plus pathétique. Ce qu'il y a surtout d'admirable chez l'Albani, c'est, non-seulement la perfection de sa technique vocale, mais aussi la façon dont elle comprend une création, dont elle s'identifie avec elle, dont elle en rend le style, la couleur, la forme. Vous ne trouverez pas chez elle ces gestes et ces effets stéréotypés, qui ne changent jamais et sont toujours les mêmes à toutes les représentations. Je ne pense pas que l'Albani joue, et chante même, absolument de même deux fois un même rôle. Voilà la troisième fois qu'elle paraissait à Bruxelles dans la *Traviata*: elle a été chaque fois différente, mettant en lumière tel ou tel détail nouveau, cherchant, ou plutôt suivant l'inspiration du moment et s'y livrant toute entière. C'est là que l'on reconnaît l'artiste supérieure. La soirée d'avant-hier a donc été, pour elle, un magnifique succès, et pour le public une jouissance artistique des plus sérieuses. Je ne jurerais même pas que des larmes n'aient pas coulé de bien des yeux et que bien des cœurs ne soient point gonflés aux accents plaintifs des romances de Verdi. Une femme de talent comme l'Albani finirait, à la longue, par faire aimer cette musique.

L. S.

## ALBANI IN BRUSSELS.

The patrons of the Monnaie, recollecting the Italian star named Albani, whose vocal powers and dramatic capabilities they had an opportunity of appreciating some time since, all came to hear her again in her best part, and were in their seats by the commencement of the overture. The house wore the aspect it assumes on solemn occasions, and was it not a musical solemnity when *La Traviata* was given with this perfect *Violetta*? During the four acts of Verdi's opera, the audience kept continually manifesting their satisfaction.

The total of the performance may be summed up for Mme Albani in two calls after the first act, an ovation during the second, and a third call at the end, but this does not represent the exact amount, the rigorously just measure, of the enthusiasm evoked. Bestowing on her their undivided attention, the public followed *Violetta* through all the heart-rending scenes which develop all the incidents of the drama, so sad but so wanting in truth, in which we behold the courtesan combatting in turn with fatality, with the warm

passions of her blood, with her past life, with her love, with her good and bad feelings, and lastly, struggling with death, and conquered by the eternal victor. They saw her displaying all the resources of her powerful voice, playing like a consummate tragic actress, and photographing the sombre reality with even an excess of fidelity. But what softness there is in her voice; what charm and purity distinguish her marvellous notes! Thanks to her mechanism, as artistic and cultivated as it is successful, she possesses the power of investing her organ with a thousand beauties and imparting to the musical phrase *floriture* and touches of refined delicacy which render it happily perfect. Her medium register—we must frankly own the fact—is almost null, but then her high notes are irreproachable in brilliant sonorosity, and rival those of our most illustrious contemporary stars. Mme Albani vocalises with pleasing facility; her shakes stand out with admirable distinctness and resemble very little those of Mme Adelina Patti. The latter lady's shake is from the head, that of Mme Albani comes from the throat, but without the usual harshness. What, however, especially entitles Mme Albani to rank among celebrated singers is the incomparable feeling which fills, to overflowing, her singing. This seems always inspired with the thought of the musician who composed the opera she interprets. We say of an author that he has himself lived his piece. May we not say with equal justice of Mme Albani that she lives, feels, understands what she sings, this being the peculiar mark of genius and constituting the grandeur of talent. The Italian language, too, furnishes her with its exquisite consonances and musical sweetness. Her acting is on the same high level as her singing. Wrapped entirely in her part, embodying the personage she represents, she leaves no detail in obscurity. Each single gesture is studied, and, thanks to exertions which must have been very great, she passes from joy to grief while always retaining the mask of truth, the image of reality. Mme Albani does not possess the poetic reflex of Mme Nilsson, nor the airy grace of Mme Patti; her art resembles more that of Mme Lucca. Like the latter, she possesses well-nigh masculine energy, which enables her to exhibit exceptional power of nerve and muscle, in tragic positions and moments of pathos. This power, all expression, cannot be denied her by any impartial critic. In the first act she sang the recitative without exciting our enthusiasm, and in the usual style, but she made up for this in the grand final air which she dashed off with astounding facility and spirit. In the second act, in the duet with M. Soula Croix (Georges d'Orbel); in the third, in the sorrowful and touching scene caused by the injustice of Rudolphe d'Orbel; and, in the fourth act, she fascinated the public and made them pass step by step through emotions which defy description.—*Le National*.

## SCRAPS FROM PARIS.

(From our Correspondent.)

At the Grand Opera, M. Jourdan, who made his *début* a short time ago as Vasco di Gama in *L'Africaine*, has appeared as Faust in Gounod's opera. His impersonation did not raise him in public opinion higher than he previously stood. The Subscribers do not care much about him; they object to his pronunciation, which they qualify as "provincial."—M. Jordan is, if report errs not, a Belgian—and the critics, though admitting his voice is not bad, find fault with his mode of employing it. However, there is no pleasing everyone, and the young singer's friends declare confidently that matters will wear a far more roseate aspect when he shall have appeared as Radamès in *Aida*.—Still another representative of Valentine, in *Les Huguenots*, has obtained the suffrages of the public. Mlle Dufranc, though suffering from nervousness, at once enlisted their sympathy. Her voice is of good quality, and well-trained. As an actress Mlle Dufranc exhibits unquestionable talent. In the fourth act of Meyerbeer's great work she took the house by surprise.—Mad. Krauss has been indisposed but is now convalescent.—Mlle Sangalli, who is shortly to re-appear in *Yedda*, will also sustain the leading part in the *divertissement* of Gounod's *Tribut de Zamora*.—According to published returns, Vaucorbeil's expenses for 1880 amounted to 4,079,000 francs—240,000 for gas, upwards of 40,000 for "sweeping," and 500,000 for the *droits des pauvres*. These three items alone absorb the government grant. The singers, members of the orchestra, &c., cost 1,200,000 francs. The *mise-en-scène* of *Aida* required 240,000, and 80,000 were spent on *La Korrigane*. What remained for Vaucorbeil is not clear, the receipts "nearly" reaching the expenditure. Was his profit the loss resulting from inferiority of returns to outlay?

The hundredth performance of *Jean de Nivelle* was duly honoured at the Opéra-Comique. Each of the principal singers was presented with an *édition de luxe* of the score, with a commemorative dedication. After the performance, the members of the orchestra were invited by Léo Delibes to supper at the Café Riche, where covers for eighty were laid in the Grand Saloon. The bill of fare was a splendid specimen of typographical art, and every guest took it home as a souvenir. The chair was occupied by Delibes, supported by the two conductors, Danbé and Vaillard. In the vice-chair sat the manager, Carvalho, with the librettists, Edmond Gondinet and Philippe Gille, as supporters. Speeches were to have been tabooed, but the rule was broken through, though only, it must be confessed, to a modest extent. Among the "to—asts" was one "To the hundredth night of *Jacques Callot*," the new work on which the same composer and librettists are writing for the same theatre. A few days afterwards it was the turn of the singers, whom Delibes and his literary colleagues invited to a grand dinner at the Hôtel Continental. In the course of the evening a gold wreath was presented by Talazac to the distinguished host, on their behalf. A ball was then extemporised and kept up till midnight. *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* will, in all probability, be produced next week. After *Les Contes*, *La Flûte enchantée* will resume its place in the bills.

The winner of the Cressent Prize is M. Georges Hue, a "pensionnaire" of the Académie de France at Rome. The prize libretto, entitled *Les Pantins*, is the work of M. Edouard Montagne.—Among the recently created members of the Legion of Honour are Paladilhe, composer of *Suzanne*; Altès, conductor at the Grand Opera; and Joseph O'Kelly, an Irish musician resident in France, author of *La Zingarella*, brought out two years ago at the Salle Favart, and of many pianoforte pieces, cantatas, songs, &c.



#### A WITTY AND CURIOUS LETTER.\*

The anonymous chronicler of the *Siccle*, fantastical like all chroniclers, devoted the piano, some weeks since, to the infernal gods. The said chronicler cannot bear to look on a piano even in a picture, and to prove that there exist in the world people of taste who share his hatred of the instrument dear to Liszt, Rubinstein, and Planté, re-edited the story about Henri Herz in California. The amateurs at certain diggings where a concert was expected in which the celebrated pianist would take part, on hearing that he had forgotten to bring his piano, expressed unanimous delight at the mishap, and begged him to give them a song. According to the story, he complied, and, instead of playing, sang them some French romances without accompaniment. In correction of this error, the author of "*La Violette*" and the six Concertos, which all pianists know, wrote to the musical editor of the *Siccle*, our friend and colleague, Oscar Comettant, a witty and curious letter, of which we are happy to give our readers the first perusal.

To M. Oscar Comettant, Musical Critic of the "*Siccle*."

"MY DEAR COMETTANT.—Your colleague, the author of the chronicle entitled '*The Piano*,' published in the *Siccle* of the 4th inst., is really too generous when he says I possess the voice and the talent of a singer. The anecdote he cites has been told very often but always inaccurately. Would you like to hear the accurate version? Here it is.

I was in 1819 at St Francisco, then far from being the great city it now is, when I one day was waited on by a deputation of amateurs. They came to beg me to play at a little place to which the name of Venezia had been given. It was not *Venezia la Bella*; on the contrary. But I had no right to be fastidious in a country in course of formation. I may add that I was promised the receipts in gold dust, after the true Californian fashion. So I accepted the invitation. On arriving from Sacramento at Venezia, the same evening as the concert, I found the building filled with an audience such as I had never seen before and shall probably never see again. There was not a woman in the room (perhaps there was not one in all Venezia). On the other hand, there was a motley pit of men of

all colours and all nations, white, black, yellow, and red; Europeans, Africans, Malagachians, Indians, and Chinese, wholly or half clad in materials of every hue and kind, the red flannel of the inhabitant of the 'placé' predominating, however. I advanced boldly on the platform prepared for me. I was greeted with long sharp whistles, enhanced by vigorous kicking on the floor, that being the way—I do not know if it is now changed—of applauding artists held in very high esteem. Bowing before the flattering storm of whistling, and glory-bestowing kicks, I was going to sit down at the piano. What was my amaze, after looking about for it everywhere, to perceive that the piano had been forgotten! There are, perhaps, cooks skilful enough to make hare-ragout without hare; but I never knew a pianist who could play the piano without a piano. The public saw my embarrassment, and soon understood the cause. Immense roars of laughter resounded from all parts. A facetious gentleman, a Yankee, said to me in English: 'Well, sing us something, as you have no piano.' At this unexpected but good-humoured request, the Chinese, Malagachians, negroes, red-skins, and skins more or less white, writhed with delight on the benches, and all repeated it in chorus. In five or six different languages, and each in his own way, all cried out: 'Yes, yes; sing, sing!' I kept my presence of mind. When the mad excitement had calmed down somewhat, I addressed my audience and said: 'Is there not among the honourable gentlemen, who have done me the honour of coming to hear me play the piano, any one who knows a person who would lend me such an instrument?' A miner in a red shirt stood up and said: 'There is a piano in the house of a Portuguese on the hill four miles off. I know him. He is a good sort, and, if a few fellows with a will choose to come along with me, in two hours the piano will be here.' These words excited an amount of enthusiasm difficult to describe, and twenty amateurs offered to go and fetch the Portuguese's piano, which would have to be carried on their backs. Ten of them set out with the friend of the Portuguese. The public and I chatted in a friendly way, about all kinds of things, while we were awaiting the arrival of the piano. At last it appeared, carried by the amateurs, who were received with a warmth which I leave to the imagination of the reader. It was placed on the platform. But, alas, what a thing it was. An old English instrument of six octaves, three of which were useless! What was to be done! Determined to bear up against my bad fortune, I sat down, with a smile on my lips, before the aught but venerable ruin. I did my best, availing myself of all that was available. Never in my professional career have I achieved such another brilliant success.

"I have often laughed a good deal over my concert at Venezia, Sacramento, where, I humbly confess, I spoke as much as I played, but, at any rate, I did not sing. Make whatever use you choose, my dear Comettant, of this letter, and believe me always yours very truly,

"HENRI HERZ."

[This is a witty and curious letter.—Dr. Bridge.]

#### THE SECRET.\*

The willows are waving, so soft, so slow,  
The dark pool lays in the shadows below,  
The lilies are sleeping,  
The dewdrops are weeping,  
Under the shade of their waxen glow.

So soft, so slow,  
So sweet, so low,  
The song they sing  
In the twilight glow!

The green leaves rustle so faint, so pale,  
The dim, dark waters they sob and wail,  
"Ah! who is sleeping?  
Beneath our keeping?  
Death is steadfast though love may fail!"

So soft, so slow, &c.

The lilies are waking so bright, so fair,  
Where gleams the gold of a maiden's hair,  
Ah! love is cruel  
As fire to fuel,  
And love betrayed is a life's despair!

So soft, so slow, &c.

\* Copyright.

RITA.

MADRID.—There is talk of *Lohengrin*, with Stagno as the Knight of the Swan, at the Teatro Real, Madrid.

\* From *Le Ménestrel*.



## A CONCERT AT MADRID.\*

On Sunday, the 11th April, 1880, we went precisely at 2 o'clock, p.m., to the Circo del Principe Alfonso (Paseo de Recoletos), where the popular morning concerts are held, under the clever direction of the *maestro*, Vasquez. The edifice, simply decorated, is extremely spacious, and capable of containing from 2,000 to 2,500 persons. It is comfortably arranged, all the places being easily reached, with a passage through the orchestra. You can get up and go out without running the risk of crushing at every instant your neighbours' feet. One innovation is worthy of mention: the roomy and very commodious circular rattan stalls, which replace nearly everywhere in Spain the absurd *fauteuils d'orchestre*, as they are termed, in which the occupant has neither seat nor support. Round the building runs a broad gallery, divided into open boxes, each with six or eight places, where the *señoras* and *señoritas* sit in a semicircle, an arrangement, by the way, general in Spain. Nothing can be more graceful, it may be observed, than these baskets of pretty *Madriñenas*, with their bright-coloured toilettes, their white mantillas on their heads, and a bouquet of natural roses stuck coquettishly behind the left ear. Alas! must the truth be told? The mantilla seems going out. Loud Lamballe and Gainsborough hats are beginning to overshadow the alluring physiognomies and veil the fine eyes which give such a distinctive stamp to the *Madriñenas*. We must, however, state that, despite of this, we have always been struck with the really extraordinary number of pretty women to be seen at the theatre, especially in Madrid, Seville, and Cadiz. The young King Alphonso occupied the large stage-box on the left hand, with his two sisters, the Infantas, and the Princess of the Asturias. His Majesty, in elegant visiting costume, has altogether a Parisian look, and goes to these *matinées* very often, but the Infantas and the Princess of the Asturias attend them assiduously. Charming young persons, blond, and elegantly dressed in the Parisian style, the Infantas appear to take an extreme pleasure in these entertainments. The Princess of the Asturias, an excellent musician, is the patroness of art and artists in Madrid. In the royal box there was, also, the President of the Society of Concerts, the Marqués de la Bogarraya, a particular friend of the King's, and an excellent musician, possessing considerable talent as a flautist; he plays, moreover, in the orchestra of the royal chapel. But the conductor, Señor Vasquez, advances (at 2 o'clock precisely), and the concert begins. Here is the programme:—Overture to *Oberon* (Weber); *Andante agitato* (Marqués); Overture to the *Carnaval de Venise* (A. Thomas); "Funeral March in memory of Esclava" (Hernandez); "Gavotte de Concert" (Espi); Fantaisie-Ballet, for all the first violins (De Beriot); Overture to *Rienzi* (Wagner); "Au Bord de la Mer," *rêverie* (Dunkler); Overture (De Suppé).

Let us now see how the orchestra is constituted: from 80 to 90 performers; a numerous quartet of 60 stringed instruments; there are 18 first violins. Reed band, very full; two harps. We were struck by the rich sonority of the stringed instruments; it is true that the Spanish pitch is higher than ours. The reed band might have been better, as regards homogeneity; but we were bound to admire the talent of a flautist and a clarinetist, as well as the certainty of the horns. Vasquez, an excellent conductor and a good composer, directs his orchestra marvellously well.

The reader cannot fail to have remarked the singular arrangement of the programme: three short pieces, and then an interval of fifteen minutes! But we must take into consideration the customs of Madrid. The *his* is employed somewhat to excess. Thus, at this concert, Ambroise Thomas's *Carnaval de Venise* overture was encoired in its entirety, and so was De Beriot's "Fantaisie-Ballet." Moreover, the King, who did not appear to be excessively fond of the specimen of Wagner's music which was in the programme, having asked for the slow waltz and the polka from the "Pizzicati" of our friend, Léo Delibes, the audience began by encoring the slow waltz, and having the "Pizzicati" actually three times. We own we never beheld such enthusiasm as that excited by the charming composition from the pen of the author of *Sylvia*, unless it may have been at a bull-fight. The King appeared delighted and applauded with might and main. *Sylvia* may safely go to Spain; the visit will be a triumph for the lucky composer.—There is something else to be remarked concern-

ing the Spanish public. It is impossible to conceive how excitable they are. Even in presence of the King the greatest liberty reigns at theatres, concerts, and bull-fights. The slightest incident will suffice to set the audience against an artist, and then they whistle and otherwise show their dissatisfaction without consideration or pity; it is true that five minutes afterwards they will applaud with the enthusiasm of which we have given an instance.

During one of the too frequent intervals between the parts, we saw our friend, M. Gouzien, enter the royal box, being presented by the Marqués de Bogarraya. His Majesty seemed highly pleased at chatting for a few seconds with our amiable Inspector of Music in France. Having been educated in our beautiful capital, Paris, he is always happy when talking about so charming a place, which he doubtless sometimes regrets amid the splendour of royalty. The chances of travel had caused us to meet very unexpectedly, the day previous, Gouzien and his friend, M. Félicien Rops, in the street at Toledo, and we returned to Madrid together. Gouzien, enthusiastic about his too rapid journey, held us enthralled by his stories concerning Andalusia, whither we intend proceeding ourselves, taking a short musical trip with our readers in a future number.

## AFICIONADO.

## OPERATIC RETURNS FOR 1880.

The following are the new operas produced by Italian composers during the year 1880, together with the theatres and towns where the first performance took place: 1. *Sogno d'Amore*, semi-serious, Bellini, C. B., 12th January, Casino Unione, Naples; 2. *I Cavalieri di Malta*, serious, A. Nani, 16th January, T. Reale, Malta; 3. *Scila*, serious, Ant. Coronaro, 18th January, T. Eretenio, Vicenza; 4. *Elda*, serious, Alf. Catalani, 31st January, T. Regio, Turin; 5. *I tre Coscritti*, "azione drammatica," N. D'Arienzo, 10th February, R. Albergo dei Poveri, Naples; 6. *Il Diavolo alla Scuola*, "azione drammatica," P. Is. Bonbee, 17th February, Filarmonica dei Nobili, Naples; 7. *Cola di Rienzo*, serious, L. Ricci, Junr., 21st February, Fenice, Venice; 8. *Duca e Paggo*, operetta, Gio. Gnarro, 28th February, Collegio di Musica, Naples; 9. *Gabriella di Belle Isle*, semi-serious, P. Maggi, 3rd March, T. Carcano, Milan; 10. *Don Giovanni d'Austria*, serious, F. Marchetti, 11th March, T. Regio, Turin; 11. *L'Orfanella*, comic, Ott. Buzzino, 13th March, T. Aliprandi, Modena; 12. *Carmela*, serious, C. Burali-Forti, 17th March, T. Petrarca, Arezzo; 13. *Una Notte a Firenze*, serious, L. Zaverl, 19th March, Nazionale Theater, Prague; 14. *L'Alpighiana*, semi-serious, N. Cassano, 20th March, Collegio di Musica, Naples; 15. *Lo Zio d'America*, operetta, N. Gialdi, 9th April, T. Reinach, Parma; 16. *L'Ultima Notte di Carnevale*, operetta, N. Gialdi, 14th April, T. Reinach, Parma; 17. *Sardanapalo*, serious, G. Libani, 20th April, T. Apollo, Rome; 18. *Adela di Volanga*, serious, A. Giovannini, 5th May, Politeama, Trieste; 19. *Il Menestrello*, operetta, Filiazi, 5th May, Filarmonica, Naples; 20. *Tancreda*, serious, T. Döhler, 6th May, T. Niccolini, Florence; 21. *Re Maccherone*, operetta, Canti, 13th May, T. Quirino, Rome; 22. *Stella*, serious, Anteri-Manzocchi, 22nd May, T. Municipale, Plancencia; 23. *Uno Scherzo per Gelosia*, buffo opera, G. Vicaro, T. Capranica, Rome; 24. *I tre Bravi*, semi-serious, Grassoni, 12th June, T. Stamura, Ancona; 25. *Anita*, serious, G. Vigoni, 14th August, T. Ristori, Verona; 26. *Le Notte Romane*, serious, G. Villafiorita, 20th August, Adria; 27. *La Grotta di Trofonio*, buffo opera, G. Ercolani, September, T. Mariani, Ravenna; 28. *Mora*, serious, L. Vicini, 13th October, T. Sociale, Lecco; 29. *I Moncada*, serious, R. Marengo, 16th October, T. Dal Verme, Milan; 30. *L'Innominato*, serious, L. Taccheo, 23rd October, T. Garibaldi, Chioggia; 31. *Una Giornata critica*, operetta, G. Tartaglione, Dilettanti's Circle, London; 32. *La Vedova scaltra*, buffo opera, C. Pascucci, November, private theatre, Rome; 33. *Il Savjardo*, operetta, V. Galasso, November, private theatre, Naples; 34. *Maria di Gand*, serious, Mattei, T., 25th November, Her Majesty's, London; 35. *Lisa da' Lupi*, serious, Samengo, E., 4th December, T. Nazionale, Genoa; 36. *Il Bandito*, serious, E.

\* This composer is a Frenchman.

† With Bohemian libretto.

‡ Posthumous.

\* From the *Angers Revue*.

Ferrari, 5th December, T. Municipale, Casalmonferrato; 37. *La bella Modista di Chiaia*, operetta, G. di Lorenzo, 5th December, T. Partenope, Naples; 38. *Inez*, serious, Pannain, 25th December, T. Nuovo, Naples; 39. *La Regina del Nepal*, serious, G. Bottesini, 26th December, T. Regio, Turin; 40. *Il Figliuol Prodigio*, serious, 26th December, Scala, Milan.

Of this long list only one opera, *Il Figliuol Prodigio* achieved a success worthy the epithet "*buonissimo*" (which it didn't.—Dr Blügel.) The others obtained, more or less, only a *successo d'estime*, and three were damned. (*Bravissimo!*—Dr Blügel.) According to the *Trovatore*, the number of theatres opened during the last decade for Italian opera in Italy and Abroad were:

	1870	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880
In Italy	86	86	91	85	80	79	70	68	66	71	67
Abroad	46	23	33	34	36	34	35	24	36	25	29
	132	109	124	119	116	113	105	92	102	96	96

The theatres open this year for opera in Italy are 69, but this number includes several of no importance. Those closed are the Fenice, Venice; the Carlo Felice, Genoa; the Pergola, Florence (temporarily opened, however, for a limited series of performances of Ambrose Thomas's *Hamlet*), and the Teatro Comunale, Bologna, that is to say: of the eight largest and most important theatres in Italy, four—the Regio, Turin; the Scala, Milan; the Apollo, Rome; and the San Carlo, Naples—are opened, and four are closed. (*Per Bacco!*—Dr Blügel.)

#### THE CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP.\*

(From the "Morning Post.")

In *The Cardinal Archbishop* Colonel Colomb contributes to the literature of the present season a volume deserving in some respects of a more lasting reputation than Yuletide ephemera usually merit. The poem treats of the doughty deeds and worldly weakness of a mighty, if mythical, son of the Church, Don Bernardo Ponce de Léon, Cardinal Archbishop of Granada in the reign of Philip II. The plot, which is detailed with considerable taste and some skill, we leave our readers to ascertain for themselves, advising them to confine their attention to the text, and to leave, if possible, unread the quasi-editorial and critical footnotes, which are of small explanatory value, and altogether on a lower level than the tone of the poems they profess to illustrate. *Poeta nascitur, non fit* is an axiom that need cause the gallant author small uneasiness. His poetry will pass muster, but as a wit Colonel Colomb (if we may judge from these dearly waggish little notes) certainly does not shine. Humour, in our opinion, is as surely a natural gift as poetry. Unattainable by mere effort, it is melancholy when unseasonable and irritating unless spontaneous and resistless. In the construction of his verses the gallant author is somewhat unequal; lines and couplets which are bald and common-place, enshrining, here and there; phrases and stanzas which have the true poetic ring about them. One of such is the description of the celebration of High Mass in the cathedral at Granada immediately before the sailing of the "*felicissima Armada*":—

"Sunlight is fading o'er lovely Granada,  
Day bids adieu, farther westward to go,  
Violet shades up the wall of Nevada  
Creep o'er the bright rosy tints of the snow.  
Hark the bell pealing!  
Soft music stealing  
Swells through the stately Capella Real,  
Worshippers low on the pavement are kneeling—  
Ora pro nobis!—on Mary they call.  
Still shines the day, though the tapers are glimmering,  
(Ave Maria—defend us from foes!)  
Effigies pale of the conquerors, shimmering,  
Mark the proud tomb where their ashes repose.  
'Dulcis, pulcherrima, casta, divina!  
Lo! at thy shrine we are bending again,  
Ave! purissima cœli Regina!  
Help us to fight for the Olive of Spain!'"

The local colouring in which the scenery around Granada and

\* *The Cardinal Archbishop*: A Spanish Legend in twenty-nine Cançons. By Colonel Colomb. London: C. Kegan Paul & Co.

in the Sierra Nevada is depicted is bold and true, the artist has painted from nature; and in strong and happy contrast to the emerald banks of the Andalusian streams, Xenil and Darro, the epithet "tawny" is prefixed to the great Castilian tableland that makes up so large a part of Spain. Deserving of praise again, though we fancy we have heard something like it before, is this stanza—

"To woman, at this planet's birth,  
Bright beauty's diadem was given,  
To reign vicegerent here on earth  
With seraph lustre caught from Heaven."

But—and, alas, there is always a "but"—unfortunately for the above pretty sentiment, the Prelate-hero is made to echo fervent observations of this kind over at least two generations of "lovely woman." A mother and daughter prove in succession equally fatal to the peace of mind of the martial and amorous ecclesiastic. His church imposed a penance, scarcely undeserved, on these ebullitions of a carnal spirit, but we hope that to read and adjudicate upon the merits of *The Cardinal Archbishop* may prove a pleasure for Colonel Colomb's readers, young and old.

We commend the legend as one admirably suited to a drama, or, better still, an opera. We quote, in conclusion, the final stanza of the last canción, "*La Puerta del Perdon*":—

"In sombre shadows ends the lay—  
Upon Granada's ancient town,  
The gloom of night is sinking down,  
The roselight fadeth all away  
From the Sierra's silver crown.

"Upon Picacho's height sublime—  
But near the 'Carmen's' darkened door,  
The flowers bloom sweetly as before,  
And gaily sings the Rui-señor  
The song he sang in olden time."

#### WAIFS.

Boito's *Mefistofele* will be performed this season at Oporto. Gounod's *Faust* is in rehearsal at the Teatro Apollo, Rome. A Verdi Philharmonic Society has been established in Messina. Bottesini is engaged for five concerts at the San Carlo, Lisbon. Sarasate, the Spanish violinist, has given five concerts in Warsaw. A new periodical, *La Gazzetta Musicale di Nizza*, is now published at Nice.

There will shortly be a "Meyerbeer-Cyclus" at the Imperial Operahouse, Vienna.

*L'Africaine*, *La Juive*, and *Le Prophète*, are in rehearsal at the Teatro Real, Madrid.

Pauline Lucca is engaged for a few performances in April at the Royal Operahouse, Berlin.

After fulfilling her engagements in England, Mary Krebs will start in the spring for Madrid.

Nicolai, Director of the Conservatory at the Hague, has produced there a new cantata, which is well spoken of.

A new three-act comic opera, *Die Dame von Gretna Green*, by Baron Tschiderer, has been produced at Salzburg.

Hector Berlioz's *Faust*, besides being in preparation at Brussels, is to be given by the Philharmonic Association, Carlsruhe.

There is to be a "Mozart-Cyclus" at the Stadttheater, Königsberg, in commemoration of the 100th performance there of *Idomeneo*.

The 15th of December last was the 25th anniversary of Franz Betz—now of the Royal Operahouse, Berlin—as an operatic singer.

Siegmund von Noskowski, hitherto Town Musical Director, Constance, has been appointed Director of the Musical Society, Warsaw.

Cageggi, pianist; Pinelli, violinist; and Furino, violoncellist, having formed themselves into a trio society, are giving concerts in Rome.

Mad. Trebelli, supported by Mad. Aline America, Sigs. Ghilberti, and Bisaccia, with M. Musin (violinist), is engaged upon a tour in Belgium.

Pedrotti's *Tutti in Maschera* has been given at the Teatro Nuovo, Naples. Bizet's *Carmen* again holds possession of the bills at the Teatro Bellini.

A Royal decree of the 6th inst. appoints Mad. Lemmens-Sherington professor of singing at the Royal Conservatory of Music, Brussels.

Soto has retired from the management of the Teatro de Apolo, Madrid, and the members of the *Zarzuela* company are carrying on a commonwealth.

Johann Strauss's opera, *Das Spitzentuch der Königin*, has been performed in Munich. It will also be given at Hanover, Strassburg, Brunn, and Gratz.

At the end of the present month, Anton Rubinstein starts on a tour in Spain and Portugal. He next visits France and England, and will then proceed to North Africa.

Joseph Hellmesberger has completed a buffo opera, *Der schöne Kurfürst*, which will be produced before the end of the present season at the Theater an der Wien, Vienna.

Franz Schubert's opera, *Alphonso und Estrella*, "remodelled" by Herr Fuchs (!) is in rehearsal at Carlsruhe. It was first produced in 1854, at Weimar, under the direction of Liszt.

The Grand-Ducal Theatre, Neu-Strelitz, has been closed for six weeks in consequence of the death of the Dowager Grand-Duchess of Mecklenburgh. The operatic company is disbanded.

A precocious pianist, Lulu Veling, born in September, 1868, is making a tour through the United States. Theodore Thomas and August Wilhelmj predict for him "a great future."

Signorina Borghi-Mamò (her mother's worthy daughter), having accepted engagements at Buenos-Ayres and Rio de Janeiro, will not be able to appear in Boito's *Mefistofele* at the Scala, Milan.

In consideration of their services in the performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at the Ducal Theatre, the Duke of Meiningen has decorated Herren von Milde, Fleischhauer, Hilpert, and Müller.

Julius Sulzer returned to Vienna a short time since from Milan, whither he had been despatched by the Intendant-General, to conclude engagements for the approaching Italian season at the Imperial Operahouse.

Mr Charles Dickens's *Dictionary of Days*—a valuable register of events of the past year, arranged day by day, with a copious index—furnishes a convenient list for reference to new plays and revivals. Some facts about each performance are furnished; but the distinguishing feature is the alphabetical arrangement, by which the dates and circumstances may be instantly found. The want of such a guide often renders the search for particulars of a "first night" so distressing to inquirers, when the fact happens to be out of the range of Genest's *History of the Stage*, which extends from the Restoration to 1830 only.

On Thursday night, at half-past six, intelligence was received at the brigade station in Chandos Street that a fire had broken out in Her Majesty's Theatre. A manual was at once despatched, followed by the engine from King Street, Regent Street, and one from headquarters. It was discovered that the contents of a large cupboard in the wardrobe, situate in the north wing, had been ignited in consequence of the bursting of a flue through over-heating. The contents of the cupboard, consisting of stage properties, were ignited; and had it not been for the employés of the establishment, the new theatre might have shared the fate of the old one. The damage is considerable, especially to the stage properties belonging to the Haverly company.

PARIS.—At the last "Concert Populaire" of M. Padeloup, on Sunday, the 16th inst., M<sup>me</sup> Montigny-Rémaury, the Queen of French pianists, played with brilliant success the *Rondo Brillante* of Mendelssohn, and *Allegro* by Benjamin Godard (with orchestra).

BERLIN.—As far as at present decided, the *Nibelungen Tetralogie* will be thus cast on its production at the Victoria-Theater.—Brünhilde, Mad. Friedrich-Materna; Sieglinde, Mad. Vogl; Loge, Herr Vogl; Siegfried, Herr Jäger; and Siegmund, Herr Lederer. The other characters will be sustained by members of the company at the Stadttheater, Leipsic, while the Berlin "Sinfonie-Capelle"—considerably strengthened for the occasion—will occupy the orchestra.

PROFESSOR BERGSON, composer of the *Scena ed Aria* for clarinet and piano, always heard with applause when played by that distinguished artist, Mr Lazarus, has written two new pieces for the same instrument, with orchestra or pianoforte. These, there can be little doubt, will meet with even more favour than the *Scena ed Aria*. Twenty-five years have elapsed since the first piece saw the light; and Professor Bergson cannot fail to have profited by time, study, and consequent experience in the art of composition.

THE renewed visit of Herr Jean Becker to London, after an interval of so many years, and his performances at the Popular Concerts, as leader of the quartets, have afforded unanimous satisfaction.

LOLA.—About the production and success of this new comic opera at the Olympic Theatre on Saturday night, we must defer speaking until our next issue. The libretto, by Mr Frank Marshall, an able and experienced hand, is both humorous and diverting; while the music, by Signor Antonio Orsini (of Naples), is fluent and well written throughout, several of the numbers being no less charming than skilfully constructed.

MR CARRODUS, our foremost violinist, gave a concert in St James's Hall on Thursday night, at which he played, successively, the subjoined pieces:—

Part I.—Fantasia, "Il Pirata" (Ernst); Ballade, Allegretto, Andante Arioso, Allegretto Grazioso (Molique); Adagio—Ninth Concerto (Spohr); Chaconne (Bach).

Part II.—Rêverie (Vieuxtemps); Moto Perpetuo (Paganini); Légende (Wieniawski); Romance and Tarantella (Tours); Scotch Fantasia (Carrodus).

All we can say at present is that Mr Carrodus treated his audience—among whom (defiant of snow and ice) were many connoisseurs and professors—to one of the most wonderful displays of consummate "virtuosity" in our remembrance. His accompanists, at the pianoforte, were Mr Frank Amor (the well-known violinist) and Master John Carrodus. More in our next.

THE GHOST MELODY.—Mr Adolph Schloesser, of Devonshire Terrace, Hyde Park, writes to point out that the original of the "Ghost Melody" in *The Corsican Brothers* is the late M. Rossellen's *Rêverie* for the pianoforte, "a piece that had many years ago an immense popularity in France." Mr Schloesser, well known as an authority on musical matters, adds that the melody of the *Rêverie* "has been adapted with very little alteration, and arranged for the orchestra for the ghost scenes; the repeated notes, played by changing fingers, happening to be particularly suited for the violins, the tremolando producing a ghost-like effect." Our correspondent, who expresses a hope that this will settle a question in which our readers appear interested, encloses the music of both airs, which appear to be identical, though in Rossellen the tremolando is in the bass, while in the "Ghost Melody" it is in the treble. Mr Bernard Farebrother, of Birmingham, and other correspondents have written to the same effect.—*Daily News*.

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